



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# News Release

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## **2 PAKISTANI MEN ARRESTED IN ALLEGED ASYLUM FRAUD SCHEME**

SAN FRANCISCO – Two Sacramento men appeared in federal court yesterday, charged with masterminding a scheme that may have enabled foreign nationals to file false asylum claims in an effort to remain in the United States.

Akram Chaudhry, 53, and Mohammad Adil, 39, were arrested at their Sacramento residences Tuesday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. The Pakistani nationals are charged with conspiracy and falsifying asylum applications. If convicted, they face a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

As part of Tuesday's operation, ICE agents also executed search warrants at Chaudhry's Sacramento and Fresno residences. There, ICE agents seized computers, hard drives, financial records, and other documents related to immigration applications.

Court documents reveal that Chaudhry, with Adil's assistance, would prepare asylum applications for clients, encouraging them to assume false names and use whatever story he thought would help them gain asylum. Chaudhry also acted as an interpreter at his clients' asylum interviews with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), coaching the clients on particular acting techniques to enhance their stories. While USCIS does not specifically track the number of asylum applications associated with specific preparers or interpreters, records indicate that Chaudhry acted as an interpreter in at least 40 asylum interviews.

"This kind of fraud undermines the integrity of our nation's legal immigration system, generates millions of dollars of illicit income for those involved, and potentially threatens our national security," said Mark Wollman, deputy special agent-in-charge for ICE investigations in San Francisco. "ICE is determined to target not only the individuals and criminal organizations behind these schemes, but anyone else who profits from them."

Aliens may be granted asylum if they can establish that they have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their country of origin. Aliens must submit their application for asylum within one year of entering the United States. When filing an asylum application, the applicant must describe, under penalty of perjury, the basis of the asylum claim. This case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California.

# ICE #